



The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
House Energy & Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Member
House Energy & Commerce Committee
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

May 15, 2014

Re: Support of H.R. 4450, the “Travel Promotion, Enhancement and Modernization Act”

Dear Chairman Upton and Ranking Member Waxman:

We are writing you on behalf of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA). AAHOA represents more than 12,500 members across the country who own more than 40% of all hotels in the United States. Our members employ nearly 600,000 workers and account for more than \$9.4 billion in annual payroll.

We urge your prompt consideration and support of H.R. 4450, the “Travel Promotion, Enhancement and Modernization Act.” This bill would reauthorize the non-profit entity, Brand USA, a public-private venture that promotes international travel and tourism to the United States.

The travel and tourism industry is one of the foundational pillars of the U.S. economy, and its continued vitality is essential to the growth and sustainability of communities across the country. According to the U.S. Travel Association, visitors to the United States, spend an average of \$4,500 per visit and stay an average of seventeen nights in our country. International travel contributes \$181 billion to the U.S economy, including \$21 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues. Foreign travel also supports 1.2 million American jobs, for employees who earn nearly \$30 billion -- it is America’s number one service export.

H.R. 4450 would allow Brand USA to continue its crucial mission of increasing travel and tourism to the United States by marketing America as a destination for foreign travelers. In 2013, Brand USA generated an estimated 1.1 million additional international trips to the U.S., while creating an estimated \$47 in direct economic benefit for every \$1 spent on travel promotion. Moreover, the program is paid for by fees levied on visitors and contributions by the private sector – therefore zero cost to taxpayers.

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We are grateful to Congressman Gus Bilirakis (FL-12), for his leadership on travel and tourism issues and for introducing this important bill. This bipartisan, common sense legislation will help to generate billions of dollars into the American economy, create and sustain millions of jobs and provide local communities with the capital they need to expand and thrive.

We strongly urge your support of H.R. 4450, the "Travel Promotion, Enhancement and Modernization Act."

Thank you for taking the time to consider our views. Please do not hesitate to let us know if AAHOA can serve as a resource to you for issues involving small businesses or the hospitality industry. If you may have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact AAHOA's Vice President of Government Affairs, Chip Rogers, at (678) 232-9455 or via email at chip@aahoa.com.

Sincerely,

Pratik Patel
Chairman

Jimmy Patel
Vice Chairman

Bruce Patel
Treasurer

Bhavesh Patel
Secretary

Fred Schwartz
President

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